

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE

January 8, 2002

Department of Natural Resources

Room 1060

Minutes

Members Present:

SCHLOTTHAUER, Bill – Water Rights
SOWARDS, Glade - DNR/ADMIN
KIMM, Harty - UGS
GRUBAUGH-LITTIG, Pam - DOGM
DUANE, Mortensen – DERR
CANNING, Michael - DWR
GUNNELL, Roy – UDAF
PITKIN, Jay – DEQ – Water Quality
GEORGESON, Michael – DEQ – Drinking Water
AUSTIN, Lloyd – Water Resources
GROPP, Ron – DFFSL
JOHNSON, Wes – DPR
WATANABE, Judy – CEM
HARJA, John – GOPB/DNR

Others Present:

WRIGHT, Carolyn - GOPB/DNR
GALLAGHER, Joe - USFS
DELOS SANTOS, Annette - BLM
LANDURETH, Brenda - DNR/ADMIN

I. Approval of December 11, 2001 Minutes

Bill Schlotthauer, the chairman called the meeting to order at approximately 9:05 a.m. Correction to the minutes - remove Andy Parker from the list of members present and replace with George Hopkins, correct the spelling of Kimm Harty's last name. Joe Gallagher made a motion to approve the December 11, 2001 minutes as amended. Michael Georgeson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

II. Report from Agencies on Any Anticipated Projects

Bill Schlotthauer introduced Joe Gallagher from the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). The USFS has appointed Joe Gallagher, to current fill Kathy Anderson's position. Recently, the federal government has made some policy revisions at the national level related to roadless areas, transportation policy and guidance for local planning. Joe Gallagher stated that he would like to provide information electronically to the committee regarding the website. USFS rule revisions mainly pertaining to transportation and planning. There has been some clarification and simplification to the rules for decisions related to transportation, planning and roadless areas. The Chief continues to reserve the decision-making authority for all timber sales, road construction and reconstruction in roadless areas.

In an interim rule, it was required that contiguous areas adjacent to roadless areas (unroaded areas) had to be identified. This was difficult to do and some believed that any and all road construction adjacent to roadless areas was somehow prescribed. This was not the intent so this requirement to this has been dropped.

An EIS is required and must be prepared for all areas where any activities were contemplated in contiguous unroaded areas. This has been dropped in favor of an analysis of the scale, scope and issues involved for contiguous unroaded areas. Often, a simple Environmental Assessment would be an appropriate approach.

The only transportation planning change is an internal housekeeping issue. The rules for the inventory of roadless and contiguous unroaded areas had been housed in the transportation section of the U.S. Forest manual and will now be included in the planning section. A roads analysis is still required.

The Chief reserves the right to make decisions regarding construction and reconstruction. Supervisors and district rangers will have their authority in those areas restored after the road analysis is completed. The due date is for roads analysis July 2003.

Comments on these proposals can be sent via correspondence, facsimile and website. Joe will provide a contact document (Federal Register announcement) to Carolyn Wright. The comment period started on December 14, 2001 through February 14, 2002.

This is project #1466. It came out on the December 30, 2001 project announcement. This is a priority item, so DNR agencies need to provide comments to Glade Sowards first and then Glade will forward coordinated comments to Carolyn by February 12, 2002.

John Harja reported that the state sued the Department of Agriculture and U.S. Forest Service on the roadless issue and the planning rule. We are interested in what the committee (RDCC) thinks about these issues and any changes.

Final Environmental Impact Statement on Skull Valley Proposal came out and had portions deleted. This proposal involves 40,000 metric tons of waste. There is a 30-day period to respond to Nuclear Regulatory Commission. It is unclear how we should respond to BLM as a cooperating entity. This is an immediate and high priority item. Comments are due in two weeks to John Harja (January 23, 2002).

John Harja provided a BLM planning update. In November, Wes Curtis, State Planning Coordinator, sent a letter to Sally Wisely, asking to become a cooperating entity on the planning effort for the Vernal District. BLM also initiated planning efforts for the Richfield and Price districts. Sally Wisely granted this status and we met with BLM in late November. The state will participate in all three efforts. There will might be some savings related to working on all three simultaneously.

Brenda Landureth is helping (Carolyn and John) with details with this effort and she has had a meeting with BLM. We have not seen or signed the draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). BLM may be asking for a little more staff assistance than we currently have the staff to deliver. The state and RDCC will be heavily involved as a cooperating entity over the next few years (issue identification, information requests and coordination, assembling and compiling data, preparation of alternatives, discussion with the contractors). There may be some issues that the state may not agree with such as wilderness and water.

Annette Delos-Santos announced that the Grand and Monticello Resource Management Plans have been shifted. BLM will return to RDCC to announce any new information. This is budget contingent. BLM received a protest letter from San Juan County. Internet access and e-mail is shut down for security reasons.

Lloyd Austin announced that the Colorado River Salinity Forum would like to make Colorado River salinity a major issue in these resource management plans as it relates to their BLM lands.

John Harja and Wes Curtis have been trying to sort out the RDCC comment letter process. John Harja will sign letters when all state agencies agree. Any other comment letters that require decision-making at higher levels will be signed by Wes Curtis. Carolyn Wright will continue to send e-mails to all state agencies in regard to no comment letters.

The Revegetation Scoping meeting will be rescheduled. John Harja stated that last Friday several states initiated a conference call to BLM's Washington Office to determine the scope of this EIS. Announcements (federal registration and announcements were written broadly and included a statement that anything that would have an affect on vegetation land management use or treatments. The scope of this EIS was intended to focus on vegetation burning, chaining and chemical treatments. These scoping meetings that will be held across the United States are on an ambitious schedule. There will be a meeting on Wednesday, January 22, at 5:00 p.m., in the DNR auditorium and another meeting will be held in St. George, Utah, on January 25, 2002.

Meeting with Nancy Kang, Army Corps of Engineers (COE) on January 7. Discussing the idea of a letter of permission. Currently, through the COE an individual can apply for a 404 permit to fill wetlands. The nationwide permit allows applicants to proceed, if the applicant qualifies for a 404 permit to fill wetlands. If the applicant does not qualify for a permit with a public process is required. The local COE office is trying to find a subcategory of the individual permit process for small projects. A letter of permission would streamline the permit process and allow applicants to proceed in an expedited manner. Work would be completed up front and the applicant would then formally apply to meet the 45-day comment period. The applicant would come before agencies (RDCC) to identify any issues, concerns and any required mitigation. A public notice process is required for 401 certification by the state. The state (RDCC) could possibly enter into an MOU with the COE. The COE would make an initial cut if the project is a small or large project. If any

agency (RDCC) disagrees on this determination it would be kicked into the major project category requiring a complete 401-permit process. If the agencies agree, then permission to proceed would be granted, however the agency would have to reaffirm this determination with a letter. This would be tested for a few years.

No new projects were announced. However, Bill Schlotthauer mentioned the Light Rail EIS for Taylorsville and West Valley discusses existing streets or using some new right away. There might some comments if there is a new right-away.

Kimm Harty mentioned that UGS could not access the website to view RDCC items.

Kathleen Clarke was sworn in on January 2, 2002 as the new director for the Bureau of Land Management. Bob Morgan will be the Executive Director for the Department of Natural Resources. The department is in the process of searching for a new State Engineer, director for the Division of Wildlife Resources, director for the Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands.

III. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 a.m.